

Under the circumstances, however, it was, perhaps, not undesirable that the type specimen should be forthcoming.

While engaged in re-arranging the Bird-collections in the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, with which the University Collections have long been incorporated, I came across the type specimen of *Rubecola tytleri*. An examination of it leaves no room for doubt that it is simply an old male of *Muscicapa parva*, Bechstein, and that it is not referable to *M. albicilla*, Pallas (= *M. leucura*, Gmelin), with which it has been hitherto, though doubtfully, associated.

One more point remains for notice regarding this bird, namely, that its synonymic appellation is usually quoted as *Erythaca tytleri* (cf. Cat. B. Brit. Mus. iv. p. 162). I am not yet aware that Professor Jameson ever applied the generic name *Erythaca* to this species; and he certainly has not done so in the references above furnished.

It may be of interest to note that Mr. Oates ('Fauna of British India,' Birds, ii. p. 9) remarks that he has not seen an example of *Siphia* [= *Muscicapa*] *parva* from any portion of the Himalayas.

XLIX.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

[Continued from p. 466.]

94. *Baldamus on the Cuckoos and other parasitic Birds.*

[Das Leben der europäischen Kuckucke, nebst Beiträgen zur Lebenskunde der übrigen parasitischen Kuckucke und Stürlinge. Von A. C. Eduard Baldamus. Mit 8 Farbendrucktafeln. Berlin, 1892. 224 pp.]

The veteran ornithologist Dr. E. Baldamus, whose studies on the Cuckoo question are so well known to us, returns to his favourite theme in the present volume, and gives a summary of the results which he has arrived at. So far as we can make out his views, it seems that the celebrated theory of the similarity of the Cuckoo's eggs to those of the foster-parent is not much advanced in this publication, although fresh instances in support of it are given. Nor is any explanation of the facts brought forward, although Prof.

Newton and others have made suggestions on this subject. But the question arises, has the author ever read Prof. Newton's article and other recent English publications on the Cuckoo question? It would certainly seem as if he had never heard of Hudson's most important observations on the parasitic Icteridæ of Argentina (see P. Z. S. 1874, p. 153, and Arg. Orn. i. p. 72); at all events he does not refer to them, and on this part of his subject the information given is by no means up to date.* The final result arrived at by the author, as given in the penultimate paragraph of this memoir, is, as regards parasitism, that the Cuckoos do not sit themselves because their eggs are so slowly developed that one general sitting would not do for them, and that it is, therefore, necessary that they should be incubated separately, which can only be done by foster-mothers. But it seems to us quite as likely that parasitism was the original cause of the slow development of the consecutive eggs.

Eight coloured plates appended to the memoir contain figures of the eggs of various parasitic *Cuculidæ* and *Icteridæ* and their foster-parents.

95. *Beddard on Animal Coloration.*

[Animal Coloration: an account of the principal facts and theories relating to the Colours and Markings of Animals. By Frank E. Beddard, M.A. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1892.]

This useful volume contains a complete account of the modern theories of animal coloration—protective, warning, mimicking, and sexual—with illustrations drawn from many groups of the animal kingdom.

Birds, though sharing with insects the brightest colours and tints found in nature, do not offer so many instances of the more striking phenomena of this kind as Insects.

Among instances of so-called protective mimicry in birds are mentioned the Cuckoos, in which family the genera *Centropus* and *Carpococcyx* show much resemblance to the Gallinaceous Birds, and *Cuculus* and its allies, more especi-

* For instance, no mention whatever is made of *Molothrus rufo-axillaris* and its excessively curious habits, as observed by Mr. Hudson.

ally *Hierococcyx*, seem to mimic the Hawks. A further and even more striking instance, not mentioned by Mr. Beddard, is the similarity of the Indian Cuckoo *Surniculus lugubris* to the common Indian Drongo or King Crow, *Dicrurus ater*. Whether these likenesses are really advantageous to the mimicking species, and are real instances of mimicry (comparable to the classical instances of the South American *Leptalis* and its corresponding Heliconid), it is not easy to say. Mr. Beddard thinks that in some cases these likenesses, of which several other instances are given, may be due to real structural affinities.

A very interesting example of protective coloration in birds is given in the case of the South American Bittern (*Butorides involucris*), which was observed by Mr. W. H. Hudson to conceal itself very successfully by flying in among tall reeds and clinging there in an upright position, where its colours and even its shape harmonized closely with its surroundings.

Finally a long chapter is devoted to sexual coloration, of which Birds undoubtedly show many striking examples. Mr. Beddard by no means attributes their sexual differentiation of colour to sexual selection only. It may be due in part, he says, to the different mode of life of the two sexes. We meet with sexual coloration in animals which cannot be moved by any choice or æsthetic preference; but it is also true that it is most highly developed in the higher animals, to which, however, the Mammals form a very striking exception; so that on the whole there are probably several very different causes all tending towards sexual coloration.

This indicates the whole drift of the book, which is in fact a protest against the too hasty and badly digested generalizations with regard to the facts of colour, form, and habits among animals that are so common at the present time.

Mr. Beddard's volume, which should be of great interest not only to the professed naturalist but also to the general public, is very well illustrated with four coloured plates and a large number of woodcuts.

96. *Bronn's 'Thier-Reich' (Aves).*

[Dr. H. G. Bronn's Klassen und Ordnungen des Thier-Reichs wissenschaftlich dargestellt in Wort und Bild. Sechster Band. Vierte Abtheilung: Vögel. Von Hans Gadow u. Dr. Emil Selenka. Leipzig u. Heidelberg, 1891.]

The recently issued number of the "Aves" of 'Bronn's Thier-Reich,' containing Lieferungen 37 to 41, concludes the Anatomical portion of this standard work. The first four numbers, prepared by Dr. Selenka, were issued in 1869 and 1870, after which the subject slept until 1884, when the authorship was taken up by Dr. Gadow, who has now brought this volume to a conclusion.

Prof. Selenka's contribution contained the Osteology and the commencement of the Myology, which was finished by Dr. Gadow, who also has given us chapters on the Nervous System, the Sense-organs, the Pterylosis, and the Digestive, Respiratory, Vascular, and Urinogenital Systems, concluding with a general account of the Embryology and Development, thus making altogether a volume of 1008 pages, illustrated by 59 plates.

If we understand right, Dr. Gadow proposes to issue a second volume, on the Systematic Arrangement of Birds, of which he has given us a foretaste in a paper lately read before the Zoological Society of London. *

97. *Butler on the Carolina Parrakeet.*

[Notes on the Range and Habits of the Carolina Parrakeet. By Amos W. Butler. Auk, ix. p. 49.]

The former range of the Carolina Parrakeet (*Conurus carolinensis*), now almost exterminated, and confined to one or two restricted areas in the Southern States, is described in this article. Within historic times this Parrakeet extended into New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Kansas, Nebraska, and probably Colorado. In Indiana and Ohio it was a characteristic bird. Wilson mentions its occurrence near Lake Michigan in lat. 42°.

* P. Z. S. 1892, p. 229.

98. *Capellini on an Egg of Æpyornis.*

[Sul primo uovo di *Æpyornis maximus* arrivato in Italia. Memoria del Prof. Giovanni Capellini. Bologna. 1889. Pp. 22.]

This memoir (separate copy of one in the Mem. R. Acc. Sc. Inst. di Bologna, ser. iv. vol. x.) contains an account of an egg of *Æpyornis* procured from Southern Madagascar for the writer by Dr. E. Pélagaud, of Lyons. The egg measures m. 0.300 by m. 0.220. Its contents were examined, but the examination did not lead to any very definite results, except that the egg had probably contained an embryo.

99. *Chapman on the Species of Quiscalus.*

[A Preliminary Study of the Grackles of the Subgenus *Quiscalus*. By Frank M. Chapman. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. iv. p. 1.]

Mr. Chapman has collected, through the assistance of his fellow-workers on N. American birds, a series of 800 specimens of the Grackles of the subgenus *Quiscalus*, with the laudable object of solving the vexata questio of the limits of the species and subspecies of this difficult group. His conclusions are (1) that *Q. æneus*, which ranges from Canada to the Rio Grande, only varies in coloration in the "limited part of its habitat adjoining the area of *Q. quiscula*, with which it completely intergrades"; (2) that *Q. quiscula* assumes three phases of coloration, the first of which reaches its extreme development (commonly called (*Q. quiscula aglaeus*) at the southern limit of the bird's range (where the third phase is unknown); while the third phase occurs at its northern limit, where the first is unknown, and the second phase (connecting the first and the third) is most abundant at the centre of the range, where, however, the other two phases also occur. Mr. Chapman is of opinion that we have here a case of two distinct species, the intergradation of which is due to hybridization where their habitats adjoin. For the reasons why he adopts this view instead of the more obvious one of the imperfect segregation of two representative forms we must refer our readers to his paper.

100. *Dalgleish on the Petrels of Madeira.*

[Notes on the Petrels of Madeira and adjoining Seas. By J. J. Dalgleish, M.B.O.U. Proc. R. Physical Soc. Edinb. xi. p. 27.]

Mr. Dalgleish gives a *résumé* of the present state of our knowledge of the Petrels of the Madeiran Seas, which resort to the island-groups of Porto Santo and the Desertas for breeding-purposes. They are of six species at least, namely, *Puffinus kukli*, *P. obscurus*, *P. anglorum*, *Bulweria columbina*, *Procellaria leucorrhœa*, and *Æstrelata mollis*, of all of which eggs have been obtained. Besides these, *Procellaria pelagica*, *Oceanites oceanicus*, and *Pelagodroma marina* * are stated to have been observed "off Madeira."

It would, moreover, seem certain from what Mr. Grant tells us (*Ibis*, 1891, p. 469) that *Puffinus assimilis* is also found on the Desertas, whether nesting or not is as yet uncertain. Mr. Salvin assures us that the late Mr. Harcourt was wrong (*cf.* *Ibis*, 1891, p. 627) in following Yarrell, as to the identity of *P. assimilis* with *P. obscurus*. These two species are quite distinct.

101. *Elliot on "Acquired Characters."*

[The Inheritance of Acquired Characters. President's Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, New York, Nov. 18, 1891. By D. G. Elliot. *Auk*, ix. p. 77.]

Mr. Elliot addresses his colleagues of the American Ornithologists' Union on the inheritance of acquired characters in a very sensible way. He points out some of the many difficulties that the reception of this new dogma would involve, and begs for further investigations and experiments that may throw more light upon this obscure question.

102. *Forbes on Avian Remains from Timaru.*

[On Avian Remains found under a Lava-flow near Timaru, in Canterbury. By H. O. Forbes. Trans. New Zealand Inst. 1890, p. 366.]

Mr. Forbes describes some remains of birds lately found in loess covered by a lava-stream near Timaru, in the province

* On this species *cf.* Macpherson, *Ibis*, 1891, p. 602.

of Canterbury, New Zealand. They are identified as belonging to *Apteryx australis* and several species of *Dinornis*. The formation in which they are found, although covered by a lava-flow, is considered to be of "new Pliocene or even Pleistocene age."

103. *Gadow on the Anatomy of Opisthocomus.*

[Crop and Sternum of *Opisthocomus cristatus*: a contribution to the question of the correlation of organs and the inheritance of acquired characters. By Hans Gadow. Proc. Roy. Irish Acad. ser. 3, vol. ii. p. 147.]

Dr. Gadow describes and figures the peculiar crop and stomach of the Hoatzin, *Opisthocomus cristatus*, and preaches us an excellent sermon with this extraordinary Neotropical monotype for his text. This, he tells us, is an instance in which "an obviously primary modification, itself referable to mechanical strain during the life of the adult, seems to have caused other organic changes, which are repeated in the embryo at a time before such a strain could come into play." Similar cases have been previously recorded by the same writer (Zool. Jahrb. Abth. f. Syst. v. p. 629). It is, indeed, sufficiently manifest that the enormous crop of the Hoatzin has produced the depression of the furcula, its partial fusion with the sternum, and the distortion of the anterior margin of the carina which are characteristic of this curious form. In nestlings of a week old all these peculiarities are already present. Similar conditions prevail in embryos of the last week before hatching, and even in younger embryos their commencement is plainly apparent. We have here, therefore (*pace* Weissman), a clear case of the inheritance of acquired characters.

104. *Godman and Salvin's 'Biologia Centrali-Americana.'*

[*Biologia Centrali-Americana*; or, Contributions to the Knowledge of the Fauna and Flora of Mexico and Central America. Edited by F. DuCane Godman and Osbert Salvin. (Zoology.) Part CII. 4to. London: 1892. Published for the Editors by R. H. Porter, 18 Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W.]

Since our last notice of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana' (above, p. 451), another portion of the "Aves" of this great work has been issued. The discussion of the Central-American Trochilidæ, of which no less than 118 species are now recognized, is commenced, and the genera *Heliothrix*, *Hemistephania*, *Glaucis*, *Iache*, *Pheoptila*, *Chlorostilbon*, *Thalurania*, *Microchera*, *Callipkarus*, *Eupherusa*, *Elvira*, *Hypuroptila*, and *Lampornis* are treated of. The arrangement followed is quite a new one—that of Mr. Salvin's new catalogue (Cat. B. Brit. Mus. vol. xvi.), in which the serration of the bill is used as a character to divide the Trochilidæ into three sections. The genera first taken belong to the first section, "*Trochili serrirostres*."

The following species are figured in this part:—*Oreopyra xaloléma*, *Delattiria hemileuca*, *Hemistephania veraguensis*, and *Chalybura melanorrhœa*.

105. *Hutton on the Moas.*

[On the Classification of the Moas. By Capt. F. W. Hutton, F.R.G.S. Abstract of paper read to the Canterbury Philosophical Institute on October 1st, 1891.]

This is an abstract of what appears to be an important memoir on the Dinornithidæ. The family is divided by Capt. Hutton into seven genera, to which 26 species are referred. The generic characters are based "chiefly on the skulls," but also partly on "the sternum, the pelvis, and the robustness of the leg-bones." The species are "distinguished almost entirely by size." The genera recognized are *Dinornis*, (with two subgenera *Dinornis* and *Tylopteryx*), *Palapteryx*, *Anomalopteryx*, *Cela*, *Mesopteryx*, *Syornis*, and *Euryapteryx*. *Dinornis excelsus*, *D. validus*, *D. firmus*, *D. potens*, *D. torosus*, *Palapteryx plenus*, *Anomalopteryx antiquus*, *Euryapteryx ponderosus*, and *E. pygmaeus* are characterized as new species. It seems to us that it will be difficult to reconcile Capt. Hutton's arrangement with that of the same group lately given by Mr. Lydekker in his Catalogue of Fossil Birds (cf. Ibis, 1891, p. 456).

106. *Irby's Key List of British Birds.*

[British Birds : Key List. By Lieut.-Col. L. Howard Irby, F.L.S. Second edition, revised and enlarged. London : R. H. Porter.]

Col. Irby has published a second edition of his Key List of British Birds, "revised and enlarged." It is "not intended for scientific ornithologists, but for those who have only a slight knowledge of birds, so as to enable them to determine a species without having to search through bulky volumes." Col. Irby now recognizes 376 birds as "British," against 377 in his first edition. The salient characters of each of these are pointed out, and a concise summary of their mode of occurrence, whether resident, regular visitant, occasional visitant, or straggler, is likewise given. The habitat or geographical range of the rarer species is stated in marginal notes. The nomenclature and arrangement are those of the 'Ibis' List "with some modifications." Col. Irby's Key List will, we think, be found very useful to those for whom it is intended, especially when used in conjunction with some recognized manual or text-book on the same subject.

107. '*Irish Naturalist.*'

[The '*Irish Naturalist*,' a monthly Journal of general Irish Natural History. Edited by George H. Carpenter, B.Sc. Lond., and R. Lloyd Praeger, B.A., B.E., M.R.I.A. Vol. i. Nos. 1-4, April-July, 1892.]

Having regard to the political aspirations of Ireland, it was quite to be expected that the Naturalists of that portion of the United Kingdom should wish to have an organ of their own. That all the existing Natural History Societies in Ireland should have agreed to support it is a gratifying proof of the superiority of science to politics. The first number of the journal started under these auspicious circumstances contains several ornithological articles. Mr. A. G. More writes upon recent additions to the list of Irish birds. Nine such are specified, while one (*Sterna anglica*) is noted as to be struck off the Irish List. Mr. R. J. Ussher comments on the marked increase of the Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostris*) in Ireland. Formerly merely a straggler, it appears of late years to have

become a resident and breeding species. Shorter notes on birds are also given in other numbers of the 'Irish Naturalist,' and Mr. R. Patterson catalogues the birds of Rathlin Island, co. Antrim.

108. *Mivart's 'Elements of Ornithology.'*

[Birds: the Elements of Ornithology. By St. George Mivart, F.R.S. With 174 illustrations, whereof 140 are original drawings. London: Porter and Dulau. 1 vol., 330 pp., sm. 8vo. 1892.]

It was with some surprise, we confess, that we first heard that Dr. Mivart was engaged in writing a book upon birds. We were still more surprised, however, when we found what a nice little volume he had produced, after what, we believe, was but a few months' labour. Mivart's 'Birds' cannot, of course, be placed quite in the same category as Günther's 'Fishes' and Flower and Lydekker's 'Mammals.' But it is, nevertheless, a useful book, and will be much appreciated by those who are commencing the study of Ornithology.

Dr. Mivart begins his work with a long "introduction," in which he reviews the principal groups of the whole order of birds, and mentions the characteristic species of each of them. This introduction is illustrated by a series of 140 figures, very nicely drawn and printed in the text. The drawing of these illustrations (by Keulemans, we believe) is excellent, but the process by which they were engraved leaves, in many cases, something to be desired. It would have also been better, we think, to have arranged this part of the volume exactly or more nearly in the same order as is subsequently put forward in chapter vi. The interposition of the Penguins between the Auks and the Puffins, and the location of the Humming-birds among the true Passeres, may cause the unwary student to err concerning the true affinities of these birds.

After the introduction we have essays on the external and internal structure of birds and on the other systems of organs. A separate chapter is devoted to the geology and geography of birds, in which much information is compressed into a few pages. Finally we have the difficult subject of classification taken up and treated in a judicious

manner. After mentioning the principal schemes put forward since the demolition of the Cuvierian system, and acknowledging the "exceptional credit" due to Mr. Seebohm for his "absolute diagnostic characters," Dr. Mivart gives us his own ideas of the leading groups of birds, as culled from previous authorities, and divides the class into 18 Orders, of which 17 are Carinate and 1 Ratite. A concluding table gives a list of the genera in each family and subfamily, with the approximate number of species in each genus. Lastly we may note that the casual errors in the volume seem to be exceptionally few. The Oven-bird (p. 118), though it may occasionally "burrow in the ground," is more notorious for its huge oven-like nest made of hardened clay; a V is omitted after F in the description of fig. 141 (p. 138); the specific name of *Odontopteryx* is *toliapicus*, not *toliapus* (p. 237); and *Cathartæ* (p. 271) is the correct plural of *Cathartes*. On the whole we can cordially recommend the 'Elements of Ornithology' as containing a mine of modern information on the subject of birds, compressed into a small compass.

109. Packard's '*Labrador Coast*.'

[The Labrador Coast: a journal of two summer cruises to that region, with notes on its early discovery, on the Eskimo, on its physical geography, geology, and natural history. By Alpheus Spring Packard, M.D., Ph.D., &c. New York and London: 1891.]

Dr. Packard has reprinted in an octavo volume the account of the collections and observations made in Labrador in his student-days, and has added thereto a summary of the results of more recent explorations, so as to form a kind of scientific guide to the Labrador coast which will be very useful to future travellers. Chapters are devoted to the geology, zoology, and botany of the country. The 'List of Birds of Labrador,' compiled by Mr. L. M. Turner, and published in the 'Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum' for 1885, has been "revised and brought down to date" by Mr. Allen. It enumerates 208 species, to which one is added upon the authority of Dr. Robert Bell of the Canadian

Geological Survey, namely, "*Procellaria tenuirostris*, Aud." A final chapter to the volume contains a useful bibliography of the subject.

110. *Salvin and Hartert on the Picariæ.*

[Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum. Volume XVI. Catalogue of the Picariæ in the Collection of the British Museum: Upupæ and Trochili, by Osbert Salvin; Coraciæ, of the Families Cypselidæ, Caprimulgidæ, Podargidæ, and Steatornithidæ, by Ernst Hartert. Svo. London: 1892.]

The sixteenth volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds,' which has been anxiously expected by Ornithologists for some time, is now out. Mr. Salvin had finished the Trochilidæ some time ago, but was unable from pressure of other work to proceed with the remaining families. The necessity of finding another author to complete the volume has caused this delay.

As regards the Trochilidæ, Mr. Salvin as an authority is *facile princeps* amongst living Ornithologists, and the collection upon which he has worked is also *facile princeps* amongst existing collections. It "comprises the two largest collections of Humming-birds that have been hitherto made," viz. that of Gould and that of Messrs. Godman and Salvin, and contains altogether the enormous number of 8253 specimens, which are referred to 482 species. The account of the Trochilidæ occupies the greater part of this bulky volume. We will not presume to criticize Mr. Salvin's new arrangement of this difficult group, which he divides into three "sections"—*Trochili serrirostres*, *Tr. intermedii*, and *Tr. levirostres*—according to the presence or absence of serrations on the sheath of the mandible. While this character brings together many obviously allied forms, it widely separates others (viz. *Glaucis* and *Threnetes*) which have been hitherto placed near one another. The concise characters of the species given by Mr. Salvin and his apposite remarks on their affinities and ranges will, we are sure, be highly appreciated by working Ornithologists. Besides the Trochilidæ Mr. Salvin has catalogued the Upupæ, containing the two families Upupidæ (with 5 species) and Irrisoridæ (with 10 species).

Herr Hartert's contribution to the present volume contains an account of four families of the suborder "Coraciæ," according to Dr. Günther's classification, namely the Cypselidæ, Caprimulgidæ, Steatornithidæ, and Podargidæ. Herr Hartert has had a very tough job to master as regards the Caprimulgidæ, and those who have paid attention to this embarrassing group will, we are sure, much appreciate the way in which he has surmounted his difficulties. According to Herr Hartert's arrangement the Caprimulgidæ contain 86 species, while the Cypselidæ have 78 species, the Podargidæ 24, and the Steatornithidæ only 1, but a good many subspecies are likewise recognized.

The 16th volume of the Catalogue, therefore, gives us altogether an account of 687 species of birds, represented in the National Collection by no less than 12,286 specimens.

The following new genera are established in this volume :—*Neolesbia*, Salvin, type *Cyanolesbia nehrkorni*, p. 145; *Æronautes*, Hartert, type *Panyptila melanolenca*, p. 459; and *Claudia*, Hartert, type *Cypselus squamatus*, p. 469.

The only actually new species now named for the first time seem to be *Caprimulgus yucatanicus* and *Egotheles salvadorii*; but there are also two new subspecies proposed, namely *Collocalia francica merguiensis* and *Chatura cinereiventris guianensis*.

The following species are figured in this volume :—*Upupa somalensis*; *Irrisor bollii*; *I. jacksoni*; *Scoptelus castaneiceps*; *Panychlora micans*; *Chlorostilbon peruanus*; *Helianthus laticlavus*; *H. violicollis*; *Heliotrypha speciosa*; *H. barrali*; *Agyrtria ceruleiceps*; *Amazilia sumichrasti*; *Ioloma luminosa*; *Phæoloma cervinigularis*; *Eriocnemis dyselius*; *E. ventralis*; *Chatura ussheri*; *Caprimulgus griseatus*; *C. whitelyi*; *Lyncornis mindanensis*; *Batrachostomus harterti*.

111. Selater, f., on the Economic Importance of Birds in India.

[The Economic Importance of Birds in India. By W. L. Selater, M.A. Indian Mus. Notes, vol. ii. no. 5, p. 117. Calcutta: 1891.]

Mr. W. L. Selater contributes a paper on this subject to

a recent number of 'Indian Museum Notes.' The author points out that birds are destroyed in large quantities in India for two purposes only—(1) for the sake of their skins or feathers; (2) for eating—and expatiates under both these heads.

The principal birds killed for their feathers are the Egrets, *Herodias alba*, *H. intermedia*, and *H. garzetta*, which are much valued for their breeding-trains. Their skins are sold and exported "in very large quantities."

112. Sharpe and Grant on the Picariæ.

[Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum. Volume XVII. Catalogue of the Picariæ in the Collection of the British Museum. Coraciæ and Halcyones, with the families Leptosomatidæ, Coraciidæ, Meropidæ, Alcedinidæ, Momotidæ, Todidæ, and Coliidæ, by R. Bowdler Sharpe. Bucerotes and Trogonæ, by W. R. Ogilvie Grant. London: 1892.]

The issue of the 17th volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds' renders the first twenty volumes of this great work complete, and the whole of the Orders Accipitres, Striges, Passeres, Picariæ, and Psittaci are thus finished. The present volume, prepared partly by Dr. Bowdler Sharpe and partly by Mr. Ogilvie Grant, as shown on the second titlepage, "contains an account of the remaining families of the suborder Coraciæ, as understood by Seebohm, as well as those of the Halcyones, Bucerotes, and Trogonæ." In these three suborders there are nine families, containing altogether 397 species. These are represented in the British Museum Collection by 7904 specimens, showing the large average of nearly 20 specimens to each species. Only 16 of the recognized species are unrepresented in the Museum.

Dr. Sharpe commences the volume with the Leptosomatidæ, Coraciidæ, and Meropidæ—the three remaining families of Coraciæ, according to the arrangement here adopted. We observe that he maintains his *Eurystomi latior* and *calonyx* as distinct, in which, however, other authorities do not agree with him*. The suborder Halcyones,

* Cf. Dresser, Ibis, 1891, p. 99.

which next follows, is likewise most appropriately entrusted to the author of the well-known Monograph, who now recognizes 183 species of Kingfishers. That he has done well in finally uniting *Alcedo bengalensis* to *A. ispida* few ornithologists, who have studied the question, will be inclined to doubt. Whether he is equally to the front in keeping *Ceryle varia* distinct from *Ceryle rudis* is not certain; but, as in the case of many other subspecies, this is "a matter of opinion." The Alcedinidæ are followed by the Momotidæ, Todidæ, and Coliidæ, of which the accounts are likewise prepared by Dr. Sharpe. Among the Momotidæ we observe that he has given three new names hypothetically, —*Momotis parensis* (p. 320), *venezuelæ* (p. 321), and *argenticinctus* (p. 323). Without expressing an opinion on the advisability of creating hypothetical species, we certainly think that these names, being in print, ought to have been inserted in the Systematic and Alphabetical Indexes.

Mr. Grant completes the volume with an account of the suborders Bucerotes and Trogones, in which, we are pleased to see, he does not find it necessary to make any serious deviation from previous arrangements of these groups, further than the introduction of two new genera of Bucerotidæ. The Bucerotidæ, it may be remarked, are divisible into two very distinct subfamilies typified by *Bucorax* and *Buceros*. This is not very well shown in the table (p. 349), where *Rhinoplax*, which, whatever the structure of the casque may be, certainly belongs to the Bucerotinæ, is first separated off by itself. Moreover, the subfamily Bucerotinæ is omitted altogether in the Systematic Index.

Besides the three hypothetical species above mentioned the following new specific and subspecific terms are first published in this volume :—*Ceryle americana septentrionalis*, *C. æquatorialis*, *Alcedo ispida floresiana*, *Ceyx euerythra*, *Halcyon torquatus forbesi*, *H. admiralitatis*, *H. tutuilæ*, *H. tannensis*, *H. chloris armstrongi*, *H. c. vidali*, *H. suvensis*, *H. humii*, *H. h. meyeri*, *H. h. davisoni*, *Todirhamphus youngi*, *Momotus bartletti*, *Colius affinis*, *Trogon bolivianus*, *Harpactes vidua*, and *H. dulitensis*.

The following new generic names appear to be first published in this volume:—*Aspatha*, Sharpe, for *Prionites gularis*, Lafr.; *Gymnolæmus*, Grant, for *Anthracoceros marchii*, Oust.; *Ptilolæmus*, Grant, for *Buceros tickelli*, Blyth; and *Ortholophus*, Grant, for *Buceros albocristatus*, Cassin.

The following species are figured:—*Dicrocercus hirundineus*, *D. furcatus*, *Melittophagus cyanostictus*, *M. meridionalis*, *M. pusillus*, *Eurystomus orientalis*, *E. calonyx*, *E. solomonensis*, *E. azureus*, *Alcedo quadribrachys*, *A. guentheri*, *Ceryle æquatorialis*, *C. stictoptera*, *Halcyon torquatus*, *H. forbesi*, *H. malimbicus*, *H. armstrongi*, *H. solomonis*, *H. chloris*, *H. humii*, *Momotus bartletti*, *M. subrufescens*, *M. microstephanus*, *M. æquatorialis*, *Colius leucotis*, *C. affinis*, *Lophoceros jacksoni*, *L. damarensis*, *Trogon bolivianus*, *Hapaloderma vittatum*, and *Harpactes dulitensis*.

113. *Shufeldt on Fossil Birds from the Upper Pliocene.*

[Fossil Birds from the Equus Beds of Oregon. By Dr. R. W. Shufeldt. Amer. Nat. 1891, p. 818.]

This is a brief abstract of a memoir (shortly to be published) on a large collection of bird-bones from the Upper Pliocene of the Silver-Lake region in Oregon. These specimens are referred to 51 species, of which many are new, and amongst them is a new Flamingo, *Phænicopterus copei*. All the species are referable to modern genera.

114. *Smith on the Great Bustard in Wilts.*

[Recent Occurrence of the Great Bustard in Wilts. By the Rev. A. C. Smith. 8vo. Deizes, 1891.]

The Rev. A. C. Smith gives particulars of a specimen of *Otis tarda* which was shot on Feb. 5th last year in Alington Mead, on the Avon, about three miles from Chippenham. Six other specimens were obtained in different southern counties about the same period, all females. The last previously recorded occurrence of this bird in Wilts was in 1871.

115. *Wilson and Evans's 'Aves Hawaienses' **.

[*Aves Hawaienses*: the Birds of the Sandwich Islands. By Scott B. Wilson, F.Z.S., assisted by A. H. Evan, M.A., F.Z.S. Part III. May 1892. 4to. London: R. H. Porter.]

The present part of this valuable work gives us excellent figures of various species of the peculiar Hawaiian genera *Hemignathus* and *Himatione*. Of the former *H. obscurus*, *H. olivaceus*, *H. procerus*, and *H. hanapepe* are depicted; of the latter *Himatione parva*, *H. montana*, and *H. stejnegeri*.

Besides the above we have full accounts of five more widely distributed species also met with more or less frequently in the Hawaiian Archipelago; these are *Charadrius fulvus*, *Streptilas interpres*, *Numenius tahitiensis*, *Totanus incanus*, and *Calidris arenaria*. *Totanus incanus* is carefully figured in young and adult plumages, and its distinctions from the nearly allied *T. brevipes* are pointed out. Mr. Seebohm ('Plovers and Sandpipers,' p. 360) admits these two forms only as subspecies, and says that they completely "intergrade."

L.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters, addressed to the Editor of 'The Ibis':—

SIR,—For the purpose of collecting birds, I am at present at the Great Loo Choo Island (Okinawa Shima), and have been stopping here for about four months. But the restrictions put upon me, and the constant worrying by the local Japanese authorities, make it impossible for me to do my work, which is so much more to be regretted, I think, as additional specimens from this locality are desirable.

I am, Sir,

Yours &c.,

May 17th, 1892.

P. AUG. HOLST.

SIR,—I observe that in my notes on the *Hallux* of the Kittiwake, contributed to the July 'Ibis,' I have inadver-

* For notice of Part II. see above, p. 178.